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Newsman Moonlighting at OEC Criticized by Rep. Williams

Moonlighting for the war on poverty by three Washington newspapermen has been criticized by Rep. John Bell Williams (D-Miss.).

"Can they do an honest job of reporting while receiving a Government salary of \$350 per week?" Williams asked in remarks printed in Monday's Congressional Record.

Williams said that three writers for the Washington Daily News—George Clifford, Tom Kelly and Don Maclean—each earned more than \$3000 from March to July of this year with the Office of Economic Opportunity.

"I am not accusing anyone of acting in any way but honorable," the Congressman said, but such a situation

raises "inevitable conflicts of interest."

Williams also printed a letter from Charles E. Scripps, chairman of the board of the Scripps - Howard chain which owns the Daily News. Scripps said he opposes the idea of newsmen working for any Government agency.

A spokesman for the anti-poverty agency said no other Washington newsmen has held a moonlighting job for the OEO. He said the three were hired during a "crash situation."

But, he said, "we feel that we're as free as anyone else" to hire part-time help.

Clifford said that "I'm as aware of anyone about conflicts of interest, but as a

sports columnist I do not write about the war on poverty."

Clifford said that "as a courtesy" he had told his employers about the offer before working for the OEO although according to his Guild contract, employees of the News "shall be free to engage in any activities outside of working hours provided that such activities do not consist of services performed in competition with the Publisher."

Clifford said he, feature writer Kelly and columnist Maclean worked on confidential reports for the office of inspections of the OEO. Kelly left the News in August to become associate director of the office.